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AUTHOR Gaus, Paula J.; Smith, Anne L.
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ABSTRACT

Approximately 300 elementary and secondary school teachers from across the United States responded to a survey concerning their attitudes toward the role and the performance of reading specialists in their schools. The teachers completed a 30-item Likert-like attitude scale and provided demographic data. The results indicated that teachers in general did not have a negative attitude toward reading specialists, and no demographic variables stood out as indicative of more positive or less favorable attitudes to such personnel. There was no significant correlation between positive attitude and number of courses taken in the teaching of reading, suggesting (1) that such courses may cause teachers to question and be more cautious in their ratings of reading specialists; (2) that such courses are not meeting student's needs, thus undermining the confidence of teachers toward reading and specialists; and (3) that the current publicity given to school failures in the area of reading may be creating a population of teachers that is becoming more critical in its evaluation of reading specialists and their programs. (A copy of the survey instrument and extensive tables of data are appended.) (FL)

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EVALUATION OF TEACHER'S ATTITUDES TOWARD READING SPECIALISTS

Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Reading Conference

Dallas, Texas December 4, 1981

Paula J. Gaus

Fairfield University
Fairfield, Connecticut

and

Anne L. Smith

University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE

This study primarily attempts to measure the attitudes of classroom teachers toward the presence, the role and the performance of reading specialists in the elementary, junior high and high school. A secondary purpose is to develop a reliable and valid likert-type attitude scale designed to measure attitudes of practicing teachers toward reading specialists. Teachers in east central New York, northeastern Illinois, southern Florida, and southern Arizona were asked to respond to the thirty item scale and accompanying personal and school data sheet. Resulting data was analyzed in order to explore the demographic and school-related varialbes which may be related to attitudes toward reading specialists.

HYPOTHESIS

Since a course in reading education might sensitize classroom teachers to the breadth and depth of responsibility faced by a reading specialist, the hypothesis developed for this study is stated as follows: a previous course or courses in the teaching of reading will positively affect teachers' attitudes toward reading specialists. The alternate or null hypothesis, appropriate for statistical analysis, is thus stated: there is no significant difference between (A) scores determined on the attitude scale for teachers who have had one or more classes in the teaching of reading and (B) scores determined on the attitude scale for teachers who have not taken any classes in the teaching of reading, i. e., H_0 is (A = B).

Definition of Terms

So that all who read this research report may clearly understand the specific vocabulary utilized, a list of working definitions is included.

(1) Classroom teacher will refer to any certified teacher who has taught a minimum of one year, whether or not that teacher is currently employed to teach, i.e. some of the individuals in our sample population may currently be full or part-time students in graduate programs.

(2) Reading Specialist will consistently refer to a person employed by a school district to work directly with students and/or teachers in improving reading skills. The reading specialist will be a member of the school staff rather than a member of the central office personnel team. It is hoped, but not assumed, that all persons in this position have been trained for their position with an eye toward the International Reading Association Standards and Ethics Committee's recommendations for reading specialists. This definition may also apply to that category of school personnel known as the reading resource teacher.

(3) Attitude Scale is a scale developed for the purposes of this study and analyzed for internal consistency, validity, and reliability before administration to the sample population.

(4) Demographic variables are such traditional variables as age, degrees held, number of years of teaching experience, etc. Variables also classified in this category are (a) content area in which degree is held, (b) content field taught, (c) prior completion of a course in the teaching of reading.

(5) School-related variables are those variables which specifically refer to the school in which the teacher is employed, e.g. presence of a

reading specialist, traditional or individualized instructional program, contact with a reading specialist, etc.

(6) Philosophical Data is that information derived from teachers' perceptions of what a reading specialist should be doing.

(7) Factual Data is that information derived from teachers' perceptions of that which a reading specialist does do or has done within the teachers' experiential field.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

BACKGROUND

This study was constructed by four graduate students in the department of reading at the University of Arizona in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an Educational Research course. Research on this topic was begun with the idea of replicating and improving prior research on this topic. A rather thorough though frustrating review of the literature proved that little attention had been given to this aspect of research. A revised plan with an expanded sample population for greater generalization of results was then considered a necessity.

SIGNIFICANCE

Since student progress is influenced by teacher attitude (Singer 1971), it is assumed that the student's progress in reading will also be influenced by the classroom teacher's attitude toward reading specialists. Although

It is fairly well agreed that "individual and small group reading instruction has proved beneficial to many disabled readers and many other types of children (Arnold 1976), the advantage of having a reading specialist, one of whose roles is to provide such instruction will be negligible for children who are not allowed by their classroom teacher to utilize this service. Further, a teacher who does not avail himself/herself of the developmental and corrective expertise of the reading specialist may be negatively influencing student progress in reading within the classroom. It is, therefore, our opinion that where the reading specialist does make diagnostic, instructional, and consultational services available to classroom teachers and their students and where the classroom teacher's attitude toward reading specialists precludes the full use of such services, that the teacher's attitude does, in fact, influence student progress in reading.

The question of what services the reading specialist should and does provide has been rather well defined by the reading specialists themselves (Wright 1975), consultants (Bragstad 1971, Schoeller 1974), university teacher trainers (Bader 1975, Olson 1967, Shepherd 1973, Smith,), and the International Reading Association (Carlson 1974). Whether these services are those which classroom teachers expect, and/or hope to utilize, has not been studied. Further, it does not appear that studies, other than on a local level, have been completed which give an indication of whether, once the role of reading specialist has been defined, reading specialists provide the wanted services to an acceptable degree.

It is obvious that classroom teachers' attitudes toward other type of support personnel (guidance counselors, administrators, social workers) have been thoroughly researched. With the number of schools with reading specialists increasing as rapidly as the yearly reading test scores decrease, it behooves

us to define what classroom teachers expect from reading specialists and, further, the variables that influence teacher attitude. An understanding of teacher attitude and its correlates will, perhaps, assist the reading specialist in challenging a negative orientation.

THE RESEARCH OF LITERATURE

A thorough survey of the research completed since approximately 1968 indicates that the studies of teachers' attitudes toward many facets of education have been conducted over the past few years. The correlation of attitude with educational considerations provides insights into the process of teacher interaction and effectiveness.

In reviewing literature, four categories or types of data bave been noted. The first area includes information concerning teacher attitudes toward curriculum and other school personnel. Secondly, attitudes of special teachers toward other specialists were examined; a third area related teacher attitudes with positive or negative reactions to reading personnel. All of these areas, further, provided information on various types of rating scales and questionnaires. These sample scales were supplemented by reviews of literature in the fourth and final area, which specifically considered attitude scale construction, sampling, reliability, and validation measures.

The importance of assessing teacher attitudes toward the complexities of the American educational system is attested by wide research. The teacher is in a unique position to influence students by positive or negative reactions to curriculum, policy, administration, and other support personnel.

An instrument which discriminated between teachers with positive and negative attitudes toward curriculum planning and the effect of in-service

experiences upon curriculum use was devised by Langenbach (1972). Variables such as participation, grade level, and years of teaching were found to interact with attitudes toward curriculum use and planning. Teacher involvement in decision making and support for the educational program were of prime importance and teachers could be differentiated on the basis of their attitudes toward curriculum use and planning. In another study of principal and teacher attitudes toward resource room instruction, it was found that those who had volunteered to individualize instruction demonstrated an enthusiasm and unity of purpose which appeared to underscore confidence in the effectiveness of the program (Marshall School District). It would seem that degree of involvement effects attitude.

Research which considers teacher attitudes toward other school personnel seems to be divided into questions related to role delineation and questions concerning services actually rendered. The areas of school counseling and psychological services have been examined from the aspects of both role clarification and services rendered. The role of the counselor as delineated by principal's, psychologist's, and teacher's responses (Smith 1971) to a questionnaire indicated a discrepancy of views among staff for both the ideal and the perceived role of the counselor. In another study by Farrell (1968), school principals and counselors themselves had more corresponding definitions of the role of counselor than did counselors and classroom teachers. However, the lack of role precedent concerning elementary school counselors was felt to account for major differences in responses to an attitude scale. In a broad study, Axelbend (1967) found that more positive attitudes toward guidance personnel existed in schools where such services were provided, and also found that certain demographic factors such as salary, resources, and classroom space tended to influence

discrepancies in responses. As a result of the questionnaire, teacher consultations with counselors occurred and seemed to indicate a need and a desire for teacher-specialist interchange.

When services of psychologists in three geographically different communities were assessed according to teacher attitudes (Peterson 1971), positive attitudes were related to the percentage of honored referrals, frequency of follow-up activity, the experience of the psychologist, and the attitudes of parents. In the communities chosen for the study, the psychological services were directed toward the elementary school population, and teachers found the diagnostic services of the psychologist most helpful. In another study, teachers in lower grades were also found to be more positively oriented toward psychologists and other personnel of a psychological services center (Romig 1970), while teachers in general found the role of the psychologist, social worker, and reading consultant to be inflexible and expressed dissatisfaction with services rendered. The types of services which psychologists and other personnel perform for elementary school students would seem to have direct bearing upon positive faculty reactions at that level.

Though the services given by school guidance personnel and psychologists differ from the services of reading specialists, teachers' perceptions of support personnel may generalize to include all specialists.

As was previously noted, current research indicates that teachers' behaviors and attitudes are related to certain characteristics of teachers themselves. Stern (1975) noted that upper grade teachers were more favorably disposed to change than lower grade teachers; while Hughes and Spence (1971) observed that teachers in urban schools, which often contain more conspicuous educational failures, were more receptive to innovation than rural or small town teachers who tended to represent the attitudes and beliefs of

their communities. The economic status of teachers has also been found to correlate with openness to new ideas. Ryans (1974) reported that teachers from above-average and below-average income groups were more liberated in their educational practices and more open to change than teachers from middle income groups.

After observing teachers' attitudes toward specialists in the school, and noting certain variables which may affect teacher attitudes, the question of reading specialists' perceptions of their positions in schools was examined.

It has been noticed in discussing other personnel services, that the perceived role of the specialist is often open to varying points of view. The role of the reading specialist is likewise perceived with ambiguity. It may be well to consider how reading authorities view the specialist's function in the school and how reading personnel are viewed within the school framework. Otto (1970) places the reading resource personnel in a staff position while the principal exercises a leadership role in the total reading program and in securing faculty support for the reading resource teacher. As staff directly under the principal, Shepherd (1973) distinguishes between the reading consultant, if there is one, and the reading teacher, with the former as a member of the curriculum coordinator's team and the latter working with students in classes. In many schools, one reading specialist must function as both consultant or resource person and reading teacher. The title of reading resource person designates the teacher who works with administrators and teachers on developmental programs while still reserving some part of each day for diagnosis and for working with teachers of disabled readers. (Schoeller 1972, Smith 1970a). In some cases, (Otto 1970), the reading resource teacher is him/herself a classroom teacher

who works in the capacity of a reading resource person for one day a week.

Bragstad (1972) has noted that the reading person must work with teachers to effect change in attitudes, in methods, and in curriculum, in order that students may move toward their potential. Mutual faculty concern should foster an orientation toward learning which is problem-centered rather than subject-matter centered (Indrisano 1972). Smith (1970a) has observed that the role of the reading resource person is determined by staff acceptance. Robinson (1957) further stated that administrators and other personnel should be ready to give active support to a school reading program before a reading specialist is considered for employment.

In an evaluation study of the remedial reading services within one city, principals' responses and the responses of the remedial reading teachers were surveyed (Reed 1972). Seventy-five percent (75%) of the school principals gave commendations to the reading teachers for their work with students, while thirty-three percent (33%) indicated that there were not enough remedial reading teachers. The reading teachers' responses to questions regarding their liaison with classroom teachers indicated that eighty-four percent (84%) met with teachers for informal discussions of student progress, while twenty-four percent (24%) suggested materials and techniques for remedial students to use in the classroom. Two-thirds of the remedial reading teachers had taken between one and three credit courses in reading while only one teacher had more than six credit courses in reading; some teachers had not had any courses in reading for credit.

Reading personnel who often serve as change agents within schools may fail to consult teachers and work with them in making educational decisions. Innovation may be "laid on" the staff without preparation (Brumbaugh and Christ 1972) and the success of such ventures would appear to be questionable. The specialist must bear in mind that teacher support is necessary for the

effectiveness of any program.

Though there may be some variation in the role of the reading specialist within schools, with some specialists devoting part of their day to assisting teachers and the remainder of the time working with students while other specialists may be occupied totally with aiding students in groups or individually, the specialist will likely be working directly with teachers in formulating programs, doing demonstration teaching, or working with students in a diagnostic role (Wright 1975). In general, it can be presumed that most teachers have positive attitudes toward reading because of its importance as a medium for learning; however, favorable attitudes would seem to relate directly to the type and quality of services rendered (Stern and Keislar 1975).

In the last few years, schools have been deluged with a plethora of reading programs which have included bases and methods which represent many learning approaches. In some areas, teachers and students alike have been exposed to one program and then another in successive years, and less than favorable attitudes have resulted from the wide range of philosophically contradictory innovations (Stern and Keislar 1975). It would seem that such practices have effected teachers' views of reading programs and reading personnel as well.

The focus of current writers has been mainly on content or secondary teachers' views of the reading consultant and the teaching of reading in content areas. The lack of research into attitudes at the elementary level would seem to indicate that elementary teachers accept the role of the reading specialist and see the teaching of reading as within their domain.

Elementary teachers, while recognizing the need for reading personnel, have turned their attention to the types of assistance offered by specialists. In many school systems, pre- or in-service assistance with reading has been accepted policy. Smith (1970b) found that new teachers with little experience

indicated a need for more background in reading and sought assistance from the reading specialist through private conferences or non-credit courses at selected grade levels. During the formative years in developing skills, teachers' sex-related attitudes have been considered most critical in the teaching of reading. It has been noted that boys tend to receive lower grades in reading and are criticized for their deficiencies in reading more often than girls (Stern and Keislar 1975). The expectation of greater failure among boys, the lack of motivating materials for them and the large proportion of female teachers in the lower grades would seem to compound the problem.

In a study which evaluated teachers' preferences for the responsibilities of the reading consultant, Hesse, et.al. (1973) adopted a Likert-type scale to assess teachers who had a reading consultant and were generally disposed toward the work of the consultant. Findings of the survey indicated no significant rankings of priorities. In an attempt to determine if content area effected viewpoint, content areas were polled separately but also failed to show significant preferences. The results seem to indicate that within an already established program there is a lack of clarity and consensus regarding roles.

Until recently, teachers have viewed the elementary school years as the time when reading skills were developed; by the time students reached high school it was felt that their reading skills had reached a level that should prepare them for the reading required in secondary schools (Herber 1970). Teachers have abundant evidence of the lack of reading ability among their students at the secondary level. However, for many teachers the amount of content to be taught would exclude the teaching of reading (Herber 1970).

In an attitude assessment of two groups of teachers, those who had the services of a reading specialist and those without reading personnel, Hudson (1975) found that both groups saw the necessity of incorporating

the teaching of reading skills in their classes, but generally felt inadequate to do so without aid. Questions on an attitude survey reflected both positive and negative attitudes toward reading and resulted in consensus on the following points: more emphasis on reading in all content areas was needed, and the reading consultant should aid the teacher to see how reading skills might be further developed while inspiring the teacher with the confidence needed to adapt his expertise to include pertinent reading skills. Lack of confidence on the part of teachers would seem to indicate the lack of any formal courses in the teaching of reading.

Two surveys conducted in 1972 by Research for Better Schools sought to determine state requirements for teaching reading at the secondary level and to investigate current practices and needs of local school districts. Findings on a questionnaire indicated that more than half of the states do not have minimal requirements for reading certification, yet school districts tended to go beyond state requirements regarding teacher courses and programs for secondary students (Freed 1973) and tended to follow guidelines of the International Reading Association (Carlson 1972).

In a survey of English teachers conducted in 1969, Estes and Piercy (1973) found that only four states and Washington D. C. required training in reading instruction while four additional states required classes in reading for English teachers. Barely a third of the teachers surveyed had ever had a reading course. In 1975 Bader found that thirty-five percent (35%) of the fifty states now require secondary reading preparation for certification.

It would appear that having a course in reading would increase teachers' confidence in teaching reading skills within their content areas and would increase the possibility of positive attitudes toward the teaching of reading and toward the role of the reading consultant. Many of the aforementioned

studies utilized some type of survey questionnaire and addressed themselves to a description of that measuring instrument.

The final area included within background data involves the examination of various measures used to determine attitudes. Some of the studies previously cited also provided insight into construct determination.

Methods which measure attitudes include interviews or individual conferences, questionnaires, and attitude scales. Interviews, while time consuming, allow for interaction and clarification of ideas (Gay 1976). Kauffman (1970) noted that questionnaires may take two forms or a combination of the two forms which include open-ended and closed questions. While open-ended questions allow for freedom of response and closed questions tend to support one's hypothesis, the two types of questions are complimentary. In examining attitude scales, it has been observed that the bias of the constructor may be apparent and statements tend to be chosen from the region of rejection rather than from the areas of acceptance and noncommitment (Phifer 1970).

Various types of scales were examined in research studies in order to determine the appropriate type of instrument for the present study. Askov (1971) constructed an adjective scale as a means of indirectly assessing teachers' attitudes toward individualizing reading instruction. In another study, Besag (1970) evaluated professional characteristics and attitudes of teachers by categorizing demographic variables and educational characteristics of teachers. The Guttman and the semantic differential scales were also reviewed.

Since most studies reviewed had utilized a Likert -type scale, this type of scale seemed in line with the present research (Gay 1976) and appropriate techniques in the construction of items were then researched (Edwards 1957).

conclusion:

The survey of background data indicated that teacher involvement increases positive attitudes and enthusiasm for a program and that certain demographic variables such as urban schools, grade level taught and income bracket of teachers influence teacher attitudes. In regard to role delineation of specialists, in general a lack of clarification may exist, while positive attitudes were related to the presence of a specialist and number of referrals honored by the specialist.

Reading authorities place reading resource personnel in a staff position while the reading specialist works with students in the classroom. The role of the reading resource person is determined by staff acceptance and assumes that the specialist works with the faculty. Reading personnel must actively seek the cooperation and support of teachers.

At the elementary level, teachers are concerned about obtaining more assistance with the skills of teaching reading and are aware of sex-related attitudes which tend to be linked to boys' deficiencies in reading.

Teachers at the secondary level, while aware of a lack of reading ability in their students feel inadequate to teach reading skills and also hindered by the amount of content they must present.

The lack of assurance and confidence in teaching reading skills within the classroom seems to be related to the lack of courses in the teaching of reading. Surveys indicated a noticeable lack of minimal course requirements in reading at the state level and also indicated that teachers who have had any courses in reading are in the minority. It would seem that a course in reading should influence a teacher's attitude toward reading and the role of reading personnel within the school.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

In our data analysis, we assume that the attitude scale developed and tested for reliability, consistency, and validity does measure attitudes of classroom teachers toward reading specialists. The responses found on the questionnaire are assumed to be honest appraisals of the statements contained there.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although the researchers have attempted to sample widely varying groups of classroom teachers, a truly random sampling would be impossible for us at this time. Therefore, the sample is derived from those schools to which the researchers had access. There is some danger of overgeneralization of the results. Future studies in this area should consider including teachers in schools from varying socio-economic levels, from all racial and ethnic regions, utilizing both traditional and non-traditional instructional strategies, from settled communities and "developments", from a wide range of geographical locations. While our sample incorporates many variables on a small scale, it was more by luck than by design.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Procedures for Collecting Data

This research report attempts to delineate those variables which will positively effect teacher attitude toward reading specialists. In order to assess this attitude and related variables, a sample population has been defined, and an attitude survey questionnaire has been developed. Appropriate statistical treatment procedures were followed and the results were then analyzed.

SUBJECTS

A modified cluster sampling technique was used to select subjects for the study. The researchers utilized those institutions to which they had access at the time of the study. In all, seven hundred and fifty teachers were asked to complete the attitude survey questionnaire.

A short description of the groups which were asked to participate in the study follows:

Group

1 Teachers employed in an elementary school in a northern suburb of Chicago (N = 30)

2 Teachers employed in a junior high school in a near western Chicago suburb (N = 40)

3 Teachers employed in two high schools in far western Chicago suburbs (N = 130)

4 Teachers employed in a junior high school in Miami (N = 50)

5 Teachers employed in a private k-8 open school in Tucson (N = 20)

6 Teachers employed in a high school north of Tucson (N = 50)

7 Teachers employed in a junior high school in Tucson (N = 20)

8 Teachers employed in three elementary, two junior high, and one high school in rural Arizona (N=160)

9 Graduate students in education who are currently teaching (or have taught within the last year) while attending a small, private college near Albany (N=150)

10 Graduate students in education who are currently teaching (or have taught within the last year) while attending the University of Arizona (N=100)

(n.b. group numbers are ued here only for ease in reporting return rate)

Total N=750

Questionnaires were sent to one individual in each school who then distributed and collected the questionnaires for the research group. It was hoped that by having a specific person within each cluster to distribute and collect the questionnaires, the teachers would have more incentive to participate in the study. The distance between the researchers and the subjects, it was hypothesized, would be lessened by using contacts within each institution. (An additional advantage to this strategy is that it saved mailing costs, a major concern for graduate students in reading education.)

Of the original seven hundred and fifty subjects selected for participation in the study, two hundred and eighty-eight returned the questionnaires.

An analysis of the percentage of return for each of the 10 groups follows:

Group	Sample Size (Returned)	Percentage Return
1	3/30	10
2	0/40	0
3	50/130	38
4	0/50	0
5	0/20	0
6	21/50	42
7	15/20	75
8	67/160	42
9	150/150	100
10	45/100	45
	Total N = 288	Total percentage return 54%

The sample population consisted of teachers from several geographic locations. Further analysis of the subjects may be found in Appendix I. Various problems, including the slowness of the United States mail, interfered with the return fo some data. Considering the lack of follow up activities, the researchers feel reasonably comfortable with the number of returned questionnaires; usually ten times the number of statements on the questionnaire is considered an adequate sample size. One must, of course, remember that subjects who chose not to return the questionnaire may consist of an entirely unique population.

Further, only 488 questionnaires can be considered significant in the calculation of percentages returned. Of the 488 questionnaires, only 32 were totally invalid. The valid return rate was 259/488 (54%).

Developing an Instrument for Evaluation of Attitude

Attitude Questionnaire

An essential component of the research plan was the development of an attitude questionnaire and accompanying personal data sheet. (See Appendix II). The attitude questionnaire was intended to measure both philosophically and factually based attitudes toward reading specialists. It was decided that a Likert-type scale would be most useful in comparing the two types of attitudinal data. A five point scale was chosen rather than the finely discriminating seven point scale; it was believed that the five point scale would yield an adequate resolution.

Initially, a twenty-four item contrasting pair questionnaire was devised. The authors developed the questions from their own knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of reading specialists. In the process of responding to the items on the newly devised questionnaire, the authors found to their dismay that, although they all considered themselves positively oriented toward reading specialists, some philosophical and many factual questions yielded highly diverse results.

A second questionnaire was devised in which many of the questions were reworded so that the authors, at least, could agree upon appropriate answers. This twenty-six item questionnaire attempted to pair each philosophical question with a corresponding factual question. It was hoped that an analysis of these results would yield the contrast between the ideal role and the perceived role of the reading specialist. It was discovered that, statistically, this questionnaire could not be analyzed. Additionally, a doubt arose in the minds of the researchers about the content

validity of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was rewritten with items concerning the roles of reading specialists clearly derived from "Ten Standards for an Effective Reading Program" (Whipple 197-). A thirty-item questionnaire with matched pairs was the result: ten items requesting philosophical data and twenty items requesting factual data. Ten graduate students/ teachers were informally asked to respond to the items, marking any ambiguous or poorly worded statements. These surveys yielded the expected scatter on factual statements and consistent responses to philosophical statements.

Demographic and School-Related Information

A review of the literature related to teacher attitude assessment had defined the school-related and demographic variables of interest. Initially this personal data was considered in terms of interval data. As it became clear that important information could be lost through these uneven interval assessments, fill-in blanks were considered.

The strategy of using contacts within each cluster sample shaped the decision to use a continuum format for many questions. It is believed that some teachers would be reluctant to fill in their correct age, for example, when surveys would be returned to another member of the staff. The continuum approach should prove less intimidating and at the same time tends to force a response.

Validity and Reliability

Content validity was already assured by the use of Whipple's standards for a reading program. Construct validity was initially tested by requesting that professors from the reading department at the University of Arizona complete the questionnaire. Since these instructors can be identified as positively oriented toward reading specialists, it was assumed that their responses would validate the questionnaire. The philosophically based statements were answered as expected. However, they objected strongly to the factual statements. The attitude questionnaire was devised for teachers in their particular teaching situation, not for professional evaluators. Professors' responses to factual statements were generally written, "it depends!"

An alternate method of testing construct validity was then utilized. Twenty students in a graduate program in reading responded to the entire survey questionnaire. Responses were within the expected range thus confirming construct validity.

Reliability was established by means of Cronbach's Alpha, a statistical device recently developed for use with attitudinal and other types of scales. The reliability coefficient was determined to be .84, which was considered to be acceptable for a newly devised survey questionnaire.

The first analysis involved the application of Cronbach's Alpha and the Spearman-Brown formula to determine the reliability of the questionnaire. Reliability coefficients were obtained on the total items.

The coefficients are as follows:

Cronbach's Alpha	.83
Spearman-Brown split half-equal length	.75

The Spearman-Brown coefficient was lower than Cronbach's Alpha, and the researchers felt that the Spearman-Brown is possibly a less reliable measure for assessing the reliability of a questionnaire measuring attitudes.

The reliability coefficient of .83 as determined by Cronbach's Alpha indicates that the attitude questionnaire has a high degree of reliability.

Procedures for Treatment of Data

Once it was determined that the instrument was, in fact, reliable, additional data was sought. The researchers cautiously tested and assessed the data in the order which follows:

1. factor analysis using Verimax rotated factor matrix after rotation with Kaiser Normalization was initiated restricting the factors to five;
2. means and standard deviation for each item on the questionnaire were computed to determine positive or negative reactions of respondents to each item on the five point scale;
3. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed between demographic variables (excluding itme numbers 5 and 9, which were nominal data) and the total scale;
4. an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and possible tests for interactions between breakdown of demographic data (ex; primary grade teachers) and total scale is planned for the near future.

CHAPTER 4

DATA AND RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Factor Analysis

The questionnaire was found by a Varimax Rotated Factor Matrix after rotation with Kaiser Normalization to test the teachers' attitudes in five areas delineated below. The mean responses (M.R.) on a five point scale follow each positively worded statement. (Numbers of statements on the questionnaire are also given.)

Factor 1

Definition of the Role of Reading Specialist with Respect to Teachers

a) Reading specialists should be concerned with assisting teachers to teach reading in the content areas (Q. 17) (M.R. 4.1)

b) Reading specialists should train teachers to teach remedial reading (Q. 18) (M.R. 3.6)

c) Reading specialists should supply information concerning student placement in appropriate instructional materials (Q. 21) (M.R. 4.1)

d) Reading specialists should assist teachers in the selection of classroom reading materials (Q. 22) (M.R. 3.8)

e) Reading specialists should assist teachers to determine students' instructional level (Q. 26) (M.R. 3.9)

Not as significant but related to Factor 1 are the following:

f) All reading skills are taught in the reading class (Q. 11) (M.R. 3.9)

g) A primary role of the reading specialist should be to remediate (Q. 5) (M.R. 4.3)*

Factor Mean 3.1

Factor 2

Role of the Reading Specialist with Respect to Students

a) Instruction from reading specialists is welcomed by students (Q. 6) (M.R. 3.3)

b) Students who receive remedial instruction show improvement (Q. 14)(M.R. 3.7)

c) Students who are poor in reading like reading classes (Q. 19) (M.R. 3.3)

d) Students who receive remediation make some progress (Q. 25) (M.R. 3.9)

Not as significantly related is the following factor:

e) Reading specialists should maintain open communication with parents (Q. 15)(M.R. 4.3)

Factor Mean 3.7

Factor 3

Teachers' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of the Reading Specialists in Role Fulfillment

a) Reading specialists assist teachers in choosing materials (Q. 1) (M.R. 4.1)

* This item had a negative correlation with the factor at the .34 level. Thus far, the researchers have been unable to account for this negative correlation.

b) Students with reading problems are sent to reading specialists (Q. 2) (M.R. 3.6)

c) Diagnostic reports of reading specialists are helpful (Q. 3) (M.R. 4.3)

d) Reading specialists are available to consult with classroom teachers (Q. 4) (M.R. 3.5)

e) Reading specialists and teachers should select materials (Q. 12) (M.R. 3.2)

f) Reading specialists help teachers plan lessons (Q. 20) (M.R. 2.8)

g) Reading specialists are available to consult and demostrate teaching techniques (Q. 29) (M.R. 3.3)

Not significantly related to this factor is the following:

h) Teachers prefer to send their students to the reading specialist (Q. 10) (M.R. 3.5)

Factor Mean 3.5

Factor 4

Classroom Teachers' Perceptions of Their own Role in Teaching Reading

a) Classroom teachers should develop strategies for teaching content area reading skills (Q.8) (M.R. 3.8)

b) All teachers should know how to teach general reading skills (Q. 3) (M.R. 4.3)

c) Teachers should play some part in the choice and assessment of reading materials (Q. 24) (M.R. 3.8)

d) Reading skills are taught as an integral part of the total language arts program (Q. 30) (M.R. 3.9)

Factor Mean 4.0

Factor 5

Classroom Teachers' Dispositions Toward Innovative Ideas and Techniques of Reading Specialists

a) Teachers seek reading specialists' assistance when planning new reading techniques (Q. 7) (M.R. 2.9)

b) Classroom teachers receive assistance when incorporating reading activities into lessons (Q. 9) (M.R. 3.0)

c) Teachers receive assistance in implementing new strategies and materials (Q. 16) (M.R. 3.6)

d) Teachers understand diagnostic reports from reading specialists (Q. 28) (M.R. 2.9)

Factor Mean 3.1

Although factor analysis is not considered an ideal method of discriminating between variables on an attitude questionnaire, this analysis appears to lend support to the researchers' prior determination of categories of questions on the survey.

Means

Means for each item on the questionnaire were computed. The mean range was between 4.4 and 2.8. The grand mean was 3.7. After consultation with Dr. Vaughan the researchers determined a mean of 3.5 or greater would indicate a positive viewpoint; therefore, the grand mean of 3.7 indicated positive attitudes on the part of respondents toward the entire scale. Further analysis can be found in Appendix III.

Correlation Coefficients

A correlation coefficient of .24 was found to exist between the total scale and the number of semester hours taken in reading courses. Although this indicated a statistically significant correlation at the .23 level (statistical significance is .19) and would support the researchers' attempt to reject the null hypothesis, the correlation was extremely low and lacked substance as a predictive measure. Additionally, a correlation of .72 was found to exist between the referral of students to the reading specialist and the rendering of diagnostic and remedial services. This would tend to indicate that when teachers do seek the services of the reading specialist, there is follow up by the reading teacher.

CHAPTER V

SIGNIFICANCE AND CONCLUSIONS

INSPECTING RESULTS

Because of time constraints, the data has not yet yet been subjected to a one-way analysis of variance. When more questionnaires have been returned, an ANOVA and tests for interaction will be considered.

The results of the study indicate that teachers in general do not have a negative attitude toward reading specialists. No demographic variables stood out as indicative of more positive or less favorable attitudes toward reading personnel. Reading specialists should look favorably upon such findings which indicate that, by and large, specialists and their role are perceived homogeneously in positive terms by school personnel.

The lack of strong correlation of positive attitudes with courses taken in the teaching of reading may be explained in several ways. Courses in the teaching of reading may be causing teachers to question and be more cautious in their ratings of reading specialists; college and university teacher-training courses in reading may be failing to meet students' needs and consequently, may be undermining the confidence level of teachers in the field toward reading and specialists; the publicity given to the failure of schools in the area of reading coupled with legislative actions regarding competency in reading at the state and national levels may be creating a population which is becoming more critical in its evaluation of reading programs and specialists who

created them; inservice reading practicums, recently conducted in many schools and designed to improve attitudes and competencies, may have the desired immediate effect but long term effects may be negligible. Additionally, high schools were disproportionately represented in the sample; since most states do not have certification requirements in reading for high school teachers and since many teachers at that level are seeking help in this area, it may be that the positive attitude is inversely related to the number of courses in reading for that group.

FURTHER STUDIES

The researchers will continue to obtain responses to the questionnaire and will then test for correlation, mean differences, analysis of variance, interaction, and whether the questionnaire tests a discrete variable, i.e. lends greater credence to construct validity. The present study has indicated a reliable instrument and has given the researchers impetus to test the questionnaire on a larger and more varied sample population.

Interested researchers might choose to modify the existing attitude questionnaire in order to partially replicate the study with greater reliability and validity. Research might be oriented toward furthering support of our finding that teachers are a relatively homogeneous group in regard to their attitude toward reading specialists. Further, an attempt might be made to identify other variables which may be positively correlated with attitude.

A possibility exists that teachers' attitudes toward reading specialists are a facet of prior experience with such personnel. Researchers are encouraged to sample those schools with reading staff personnel. Such

a study could identify by survey, interview, or observation, the services which a reading specialist performs and then sample teachers' attitudes toward the presence, role and effectiveness of the specialist.

Schools with a high percentage of nonfunctioning readers in the student population may contain teachers who are more positively oriented toward reading specialists than schools without an obvious reading problem. Conversely, although teachers within schools in low income (low tax base) areas often find student failure due to reading problems, they may well feel that money for salaries of the specialists would be better spent on materials for their own classes. Research of these aspects of the problem would provide valuable insights into teacher attitude.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The findings of the present study cannot be viewed as predictive of attitudes of teachers toward reading specialists because of the lack of a high correlation which would support the main hypothesis. However, the results of the study do indicate relatively positive attitudes of teachers toward the position of reading specialists within the school.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Since 1) teachers appear not to be negatively oriented toward the position of reading specialist within the school, 2) a qualified reading specialist can provide a multitude of valuable services for both teachers and students, and 3) many teachers appear frustrated with students' apparent inability to complete required reading assignments with a satisfactory level of competence, it seems obvious that placement of reading

specialists within schools should be considered where a high priority is placed upon teacher support personnel.

Finally, reading specialists should be aware that the general disposition of classroom teachers toward reading specialists is not negative. Therefore, an ingratiation policy aimed at promoting acceptance and/or improving attitude does not seem warranted. A specialist who fulfills role expectancies can expect teachers to be cooperative.

APPENDIX I

Description of Sample

Some Relevant Demographic Variables

Total N = 288

Sex	N	%
Males	92	32
Females	195	68
Level Taught		
Primary	55	20
Intermediate	35	13
Junior High	40	14
High School	91	32
Combinations:		
Primary-Inter.	18	6
Jr. Hi.-Hi. Sch.	16	6
Other Combinations	24	9

Age	N	%
20-25*	104	37
26-30	69	25
31-35	33	12
36-40	24	8
41-45	22	8
46-50	12	4
50+**	17	6
Degree Held		
B.A.	60	21
B.A. + 15	117	41
M.A.	56	20
M.A. + 15	46	16
Ed. Sp.	3	1
D. Ed.	1	1/2 of 1
No degree	1	1/2 of 1

* The sample contained an unusually large number of young teachers because the researchers sampled a large graduate population through their classes.

** The percentage of subjects over 50 is influenced by the fact that rural Arizona schools are often staffed by (1) retired teachers from other areas and (2) retired armed services personnel.

Department of Reading
College of Education
University of Arizona
Tucson, Arizona 85721

APPENDIX II a
Attitude Scale

You have been selected to participate in a research project to assess the relationship between classroom teachers and reading specialists. Your assistance in completing this questionnaire is appreciated.

Circle or fill in the appropriate item.

1. Are you currently teaching? _____ Yes 1 No 2

2. Sex _____ Male 1 Female 2

3. Age _____ 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 +

4. Degree held _____ BA 1 BA+15 2 MA 3 MA+15 4 Ed.Sp. 5 D.Ed. 6 Ph.D. 7

5. Field in which highest degree is held _____ 1-25

6. Courses completed in the teaching of reading _ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 +
Indicate by circling whether semester quarter hours

7. Years of teaching experience _____ 1 3 6 9 12 15 18 21 24 27 30 33 36 +

8. Level taught _____ primary 1 intermediate 2 junior high 3 senior high 4

9. Content area, if specialized _____ 1-25

10. Class size _____ 12-20 1 21-29 2 30-38 3 39-47 4

11. Type of instructional program (ex. individualized, lecture) _____ 1-6

12. Do you have a reading specialist in your school? Yes 1 No 2

13. Have you referred students to the reading specialist? _____ Yes 1 No 2

14. Have these students recieved diagnostic/remedial services? _____ Yes 1 No 2

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Circle the item which best describes your views

		Strongly disagree	Tend to agree	Neutral	Tend to agree	Strongly agree
1.	The reading specialist assists in choosing appropriate materials.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	My students go to the reading specialist when they have reading problems.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Diagnostic and progress reports from reading personnel are helpful to teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Reading specialists do not have time for consultations with classroom teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	A primary role of the reading specialist should be to teach remedial reading.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Instruction from the reading specialist is welcomed by poor readers.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Teachers do not seek the reading specialist's assistance when planning new reading techniques.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The classroom teacher is responsible for developing strategies for teaching content area reading skills.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Classroom teachers do not receive assistance from the reading specialist when incorporating reading activities into their lessons.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Teachers prefer to work with their students and not to have them go to the reading specialist.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	All reading skills are taught in the reading class.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Selection of materials and evaluation of texts is jointly conducted by reading personnel and by classroom teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Knowing how to teach general reading skills should be a requirement for all teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Students who receive remedial instruction show improvement in classroom reading tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Parents should not contact the reading specialist concerning the progress of their children in reading classes.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	The reading specialist helps teachers to implement new strategies and materials based on the needs of pupils.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Assisting teachers to teach reading in the content areas is not a concern of the reading specialist.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Reading specialists should not feel responsible for training classroom teachers in remedial reading techniques.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Students who are poor in reading dislike special classes with the reading teacher.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Teachers are assisted by the reading specialist in developing Directed Reading Lessons in all subjects.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Placement of students in instructional level materials should not be a concern of the reading specialist.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Choice of reading materials for the classroom is not part of the reading specialist's role.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Reading specialists should have interaction with parents concerning the role of the home in language and reading growth.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Classroom teachers have little say in the choice and assessment of reading materials.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	Students who receive remedial reading instruction make little progress in reading.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	Reading personnel should assist teachers of all subjects to determine student's instructional levels.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	Classroom teachers should not be responsible for teaching reading skills.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	Reading specialist's diagnostic reports contain jargon which is unclear.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	The reading specialist is available for consulting and for demonstrating teaching techniques within the classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	Reading skills are taught as an integral part of my total Language Arts Program.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX II b

Scoring Grid for Attitude Scale

Positive items: Nos. 1,2,3,5,6,8,12,13,14,16,20,23,26,29,30

Negative items: Nos. 4,7,10,11,15,17,18,19,21,22,24,25,27,28

	strongly disagree	tend to disagree	neutral	tend to agree	strongly agree
1	1	2	3	4	5
2	1	2	3	4	5
3	1	2	3	4	5
4	5	4	3	2	1
5	1	2	3	4	5
6	1	2	3	4	5
7	5	4	3	2	1
8	1	2	3	4	5
9	5	4	3	2	1
10	5	4	3	2	1
11	5	4	3	2	1
12	1	2	3	4	5
13	1	2	3	4	5
14	1	2	3	4	5
15	5	4	3	2	1
16	1	2	3	4	5
17	5	4	3	2	1
18	5	4	3	2	1
19	5	4	3	2	1
20	1	2	3	4	5
21	5	4	3	2	1
22	5	4	3	2	1
23	1	2	3	4	5
24	5	4	3	2	1
25	5	4	3	2	1
26	1	2	3	4	5
27	5	4	3	2	1
28	5	4	3	2	1
29	1	2	3	4	5
30	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX III

Mean Responses

Attitude Variables	Mean Response
15	4.4
3,13,27,23	4.3
17,21	4.2
1	4.1
11,25,26,30	3.9
8,22,24	3.8
14,18	3.7
2,16	3.6
4	3.5
5,10,19	3.4
6,12,29	3.3
9	3.0
7,28	2.9
20	2.8

Range of Means: 4.4-2.8

Grand Mean 3.7

Attitude Variables	Mean Response
1	4.1
2	3.6
3	4.3
4	3.5
5	3.4
6	3.3
7	2.9
8	3.8
9	3.0
10	3.4
11	3.9
12	3.3
13	4.3
14	3.7
15	4.4
16	3.6
17	4.2
18	3.8
19	3.4
20	2.8
21	4.2
22	3.8
23	4.3
24	3.8
25	3.9
26	3.9
27	4.3
28	2.9
29	3.3
30	3.9

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